

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Please **AMEND** claims 16, 30 and 39 as follows.

Please **CANCEL** claim 18 without prejudice or disclaimer.

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of claims

1. – 15. (Canceled).

16. (Currently amended) A method for the preparation and bottling of liquids comprising:

enriching the a liquid with at least one of oxygen and an oxygen/gas mixture to produce a gas enriched liquid;

filling one or more containers with the gas enriched liquid; and

sealing the containers pressure-tight,

wherein the gas enriched liquid is kept under the nitrogen atmosphere for at least part of the time after the liquid gas is enriched, and

wherein the gas enriched liquid is kept under the nitrogen atmosphere from the time of gas enrichment until a desired fill height in the container is reached.

17. (Canceled).

18. (Canceled).

19. (Previously presented) The method for the preparation and bottling of liquids according to claim 16, wherein the nitrogen atmosphere is overpressurized, preferably in the range between 1 and 10 bar.

20. (Previously presented) The method for the preparation and bottling of liquids according to claim 16, further comprising prepressurizing a container with nitrogen prior to the filling of the container with gas enriched liquid, wherein the container prepressure corresponds to the fill pressure of the gas enriched liquid.

21. (Previously presented) The method for the preparation and bottling of liquids according to claim 16, further comprising flushing a container one or more times with nitrogen prior to the filling of the container with the gas enriched liquid.

22. (Previously presented) The method for the preparation and bottling of liquids according to claim 20, wherein, prior to prepressurizing with nitrogen, the method further comprising evacuating the container one or more times prior to filling the container with gas enriched liquid, whereby the container is evacuated prior to being prepressurized with nitrogen.

23. (Previously presented) The method for the preparation and bottling of liquids of claim 21, further comprising prepressurizing the container at least one of before and after the flushing with nitrogen.

24. (Previously presented) The method for the preparation and bottling of liquids according to claim 16, wherein when the gas enriched liquid is introduced into the container, the return gas is collected and used for flushing one or more subsequent containers.

25. (Previously presented) The method for the preparation and bottling of liquids according to claim 16, further comprising introducing a liquid gas into the container prior to the filling of the container with gas enriched liquid.

26. (Previously presented) The method for the preparation and bottling of liquids of claim 25, wherein the liquid gas is at least one of nitrogen and oxygen.

27. (Previously presented) The method for the preparation and bottling of liquids of claim 25, wherein the liquid gas enters the container before the container is evacuated.

28. (Canceled).

29. (Previously presented) The method for the preparation and bottling of liquids of claim 16, wherein the container may be a bottle or a can.

30. (Currently Amended) An apparatus for the preparation and bottling of liquids comprising:

at least one filling element having a liquid valve;

at least one gas valve;

a nitrogen-filled chamber;

a flow connection for flushing and/or prepressurizing a container with nitrogen being located between the at least one filling element and the nitrogen filled chamber through the at least one gas valve; and

a vat at least partially filled with a liquid pressured with nitrogen, said liquid being a gas enriched liquid which is enriched with at least one of oxygen and an oxygen/gas mixture,

wherein the apparatus is configured to maintain the gas enriched liquid under a nitrogen atmosphere from a time of gas enrichment until a desired fill height in the container is reached.

31. (Previously presented) The apparatus for the preparation and bottling of liquids of claim 30, wherein the filling element is connected to at least one of a flush gas channel via a flush valve, and a pure gas channel via a prepressurization valve.

32. (Previously presented) The apparatus for the preparation and bottling of liquids of claim 30, wherein the filling element is connected to at least one of a relief channel and a vacuum channel via one or more relief valves.

33. (Previously presented) The apparatus for the preparation and bottling of liquids of claim 30, wherein a gas enriched liquid enters a partially filled tank pressurizable with nitrogen.

34. (Previously presented) The apparatus for the preparation and bottling of liquids of claim 33, wherein the liquid in the vat is pressured with nitrogen in a range of 1 to 10 bar.

35. (Previously presented) The apparatus for the preparation and bottling of liquids of claim 33, wherein the liquid in at least one of the vat and tank is separated from the pressure-exerting gas.

36. (Previously presented) The apparatus for the preparation and bottling of liquids of claim 35, wherein movable floats or elastic membranes are used to separate the pressure-exerting gas.

37. (Previously presented) The apparatus for the preparation and bottling of liquids of claim 30, wherein a device for introducing a liquid gas into an open container is operable before a filling device fills the open container with a gas enriched liquid.

38. (Previously presented) The apparatus for the preparation and bottling of liquids of claim 30, wherein the container includes a gas enriched liquid that is enriched with oxygen, an oxygen/gas mixture, or other applicable gas.

39. (Currently Amended) The apparatus for the preparation and bottling of liquids according to claim 30, wherein the gas ~~enriched~~ enriching the liquid may be in dissolved form.

40. (Previously presented) The apparatus for the preparation and bottling of liquids of claim 30, wherein the container may be a bottle or a can.